



#CreekFest15

A Mvskoke Media production - The official tribal newspaper of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation

MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS



2015 Festival sees swell of attendees

Jessica McBride/MNN

The 2015 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival 5K Run/Walk June 27 drew participants from under one year to 90-years-old.

41st annual event draws to a close

Amanda Rutland/Media Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The late afternoon sun shown bright from the west and a fire cracked in the center of the clearing. The sound of a male voice cut through the chatter of the crowd.

“Locv! Locv!” (turtle, turtle) was the call for stompdancers opening the 41st annual Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival June 25 at

the Claude A. Cox Omniplex in Okmulgee.

“The stompdance is a time where everyone is welcome to come out and experience the exhibition and enjoy the hogfry and frybread,” MCN Department of Tourism and Recreation Director Will Lowe said.

During the stompdance, MCN Second Chief Louis Hicks was honored and given a Pendleton blanket from MCN Principal

Chief George Tiger.

Tallahassee Ceremonial Ground member and Tokpalv (stick man) Josiah Buckley picked dance leaders. He has attended the Festival stompdance since he was a child.

Buckley said he does not focus on the difference between dancing at the ceremonial ground and the Festival.

“I really don’t pay attention, I just have fun,” Buckley said.

The dancing continued until the late evening.

A number of sports activities for all ages began bright and early on day two of Festival, June 26: the golf tournament at Fountainhead Golf Course in Checotah, the Junior Olympics at Harmon Stadium in Okmulgee and senior citizens’ activities at the senior housing near the MCN

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Mvskoke Media honored with 14 NAJA awards

Mvskoke Media/Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The media arm of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) was honored with 14 awards from the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA).

NAJA holds the National Native Media Awards annually, recognizing Native American journalists and reporters that cover Native issues.

‘Muscogee Nation News’ Editor Sterling Cosper thanked MCN, NAJA, ‘MNN’ staff and subscribers for their roles in elevating Mvskoke Media to a higher standard.

“I am immensely proud of the ‘Muscogee Nation News’ and continue to be impressed by our consistent growth as well as that of the other Mvskoke Media subsidiaries who won this year,” Cosper said. “It is an honor to be recognized in the National Native Media Awards, which have become increasingly competitive as the Native American Journalists Association gains more members.”

Mvskoke Media strives to provide comprehensive, balanced, accurate and quality coverage of relevant information regarding Muscogee (Creek) Nation programs, services, events and citizens. Mvskoke Media provides coverage twice a month in print through the ‘Muscogee Nation News,’ a weekly radio show through ‘Mvskoke Radio’ and a weekly television show through ‘Native News Today.’

Awards are as follows:

Professional Division- Television- 1st place Best News Story Jason Salsman, 3rd place Best Feature Story Jason Salsman.

Professional Division- Radio- 1st place General Excellence Mvskoke Radio, 1st place Best Feature Story Gary Fife, 2nd place Best Feature Story Darren DeLaune.

Professional Division- Print- 1st place Best Column Gary Fife, 2nd place Best Column Darren DeLaune, 3rd place Best Column Gary Fife, 2nd place Best Sports Story Darren DeLaune, 2nd place Best Feature Story Chelsie Rich, 2nd place Best Layout ‘Muscogee Nation News.’

Associate Division- Print- 1st place Best Coverage of Native Americans Jessica McBride, 1st place Best Feature Story Jessica McBride, 2nd place Best News Story Jessica McBride.

MCN hosts at-large citizen forum



Maranda Coon/Intern

Muscogee (Creek) citizens who live outside the Muscogee (Creek) Nation jurisdiction were hosted by MCN June 19 for the at-large listening forum.

Citizens residing outside jurisdiction learn about services

Amanda Rutland/Media Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation hosted an at-large listening forum June 19 at the College of the Muscogee Nation Student Center in Okmulgee. The event was held for Muscogee (Creek) citizens living outside the MCN jurisdiction, many of which lived outside of Oklahoma.

During the forum, departments and programs delivered presentations about the services they have available for at-large citizens. Tribal leaders also listened to concerns from forum attendees.

Attendee Victoria Bomberry of California said she visited the MCN website in the past for information but the forum provided a new level of clarity.

“To actually be here and experience interacting with peo-

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New emergency center announced in Okmulgee

Expansion to decrease wait times, patients leaving untreated

MCNDH/Media Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health announced plans June 25 for emergency room expansion at the MCN Medical Center in Okmulgee.

The project will add 7,407 additional square feet to the current emergency room space and is expected to create a tremendous impact for Okmulgee and the surrounding areas for both Native and non-Native patients.

The expansion will increase

patient satisfaction, decrease patient wait time and lower the rate of patients leaving the facility without being seen.

The current facility operates in 4,856 square feet with one large trauma room divided by a curtain.

The new emergency room expansion will include a total of 18 additional emergency rooms consisting of three trauma rooms, 10 fast track treatment rooms, four observation/treatment rooms and one isolation/decontamination room.

An additional entrance into radiology will be created to

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FORUM

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ple was tremendous. So, I got a much better understanding of what is going on here at Muscogee Nation and just to see the tremendous growth and the new services really makes me proud,” Bomberry said.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Eli Grayson, who was involved in

the experience was a pilot program to educate at-large citizens with the intention of benefitting their communities and she felt that mission was accomplished.

“It was a grueling schedule but they have a lot of information and we know that it can be

“I got a much better understanding of what is going on here at Muscogee Nation and just to see the tremendous growth and the new services really makes me proud.”

— Muscogee (Creek) citizen Victoria Bomberry

organizing the forum, said a lot of the information was previously unknown to attendees.

“Everyone here said they didn’t know 80 percent of the stuff that was going on here [at the Nation],” Grayson said. “It is just not receiving information from here; it’s actually inputting, ‘how could the tribe help us out?’ ”

The visitors also toured the MCN Tribal Complex and attended the MCN Nation Council regular session June 20.

MCN Public Relations Manager Selina Jayne Dornan said

done. We know that it is helpful,” Jayne Dornan said.

Jayne Dornan went on to say the one possible fault with the experience is that it needed more time.

That sentiment was echoed by attendee Cindy Long of Florida.

“There is much to take in and we just need more time because I know there is more to what is being done that we didn’t even get a chance to hit on today,” Long said.

Jayne Dornan hopes the Nation will do something similar again in the future.

Candidate profiles to be taken at filing

More candidate forum, election details released

Mvskoke Media/Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The ‘Muscogee Nation News’ will take candidate profile information and photos **on-site** during the filing period July 20-22 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. for the 2015 Muscogee (Creek) Nation officer elections.

MNN staff will be on-hand during registration at the Tribal Conference Room on the MCN Tribal Complex in Okmulgee to take photos and workstations will be set up for those filing to fill out or submit their **100 total word limit** bios, which will run in the MNN Aug. 15 edition.

Bios should include, as available, candidates’: full name, district and seat they are running for, clan, tribal town, ceremonial ground and/or church, education/experience, contact information for citizens and campaign platform.

No information will be changed after candidates leave the polling area and photo submissions/retakes will not be allowed. Portraits cannot

be used for candidates’ campaign material.

Word limits must be strictly adhered to and will be cut at staff discretion if they go beyond the amount allotted.

The profile submission period has been narrowed to quickly inform Muscogee (Creek) citizens ahead of deadlines established by the MCN Election Board.

A candidate forum hosted by Mvskoke Media will be held Aug. 15 at the Dome Building on the Claude A. Cox Omniplex in Okmulgee, with the second chief portion starting at 10 a.m. and principal chief at 1 p.m.

For more information about the profiles, contact MNN Editor Sterling Cosper at: 918-732-7697 or email: scosper@mcn-nsn.gov.

From the MCN Election Board:

The filing fees are as follows: MCN principal chief - \$1,500, second chief - \$1,000 and National Council representative - \$500.

For more information about the election, contact the board at: 918-732-7631 or 918-732-7685.

MCN program coordinates jail tour for minors



Darren DeLaune/MNN

At-risk youth walk towards the David L. Moss Criminal Justice Center in Tulsa, Okla., for a tour of the facility.

Reintegration aims to show the consequences of crime

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

TULSA, Okla. — Several Muscogee (Creek) youth went on an outing June 22 to somewhere that is not on the usual list of field trips.

With the help of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reintegration Program, the destination was Tulsa to visit the David L. Moss Criminal Justice Center also known as Tulsa County Jail.

DLMCJC had some of their inmates featured on the television shows ‘Lockup’ and ‘Jail.’

Why a tour of the jail?

“This is a place you do not want to end up being at,” RiP Youth Specialist Keith Green said. “We want them to see now and see what taking the wrong

road can do.”

Why did it have to be this extreme?

“Because a majority of the time, in order for children to understand, they will need to see it,” RiP Case Manager Carrie Wyatt said. “That is the only way they will understand.”

Wyatt explained to the youth that their actions have consequences.

“We hope they will understand the choices that they make from a day-to-day basis and what those choices can lead to,” Wyatt said.

The youth took the tour and saw what a jail looks like from the inside.

They met with DLMCJC Chief Deputy Michelle Robinette and Muscogee (Creek) citizen and detention officer Robert Walker.

The tour began with an introduction and the youth were

asked about their initial perceptions of jail.

Walker explained the difference between jail and prison.

Then the youth were then taken on a tour, which ended with them having the same lunch as the inmates.

Beans and rice were served, which Walker said is a hot commodity.

“We want them to see that jail is not glorified,” Walker said. “A lot of people when asked how jail is will try to glorify it and say it is worse or cooler than what it is perceived from the truth. I am hoping that they see for themselves what the jail is like and do not believe what other people or the television say.”

During the tour, the inmates were told to turn and face the wall when the youth walked by.

However, one inmate risked getting in trouble to deliver a message.

“Don’t come here,” they said. “Do not get in trouble and come here.”

Walker has high hopes for these tours.

“If the children can see what the inmates go through then hopefully that will turn them around,” Walker said. “If it reaches one kid and helps them, then we did our job.”

One 15-year-old minor dreaded the tour beforehand.

“It scared me,” she said. “Seeing the jail today helped me to make better choices in who my friends are and show respect to my family.”

For more information about the program or jail tours, contact RiP at: 918-652-2676.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen elected to Beggs City Council

Jack Melton excited about new position, challenge

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) citizen Lanissa Jack Melton was elected as Ward 4 city council member for the City of Beggs on April 7 and sworn into office in May.

Melton has goals that she would like to meet during her tenure on the city council.

“I feel that Beggs is growing,” Melton said. “If we can get more projects into our city, we can get more employment for people that live here.”

Melton said that more families are moving to Beggs and some of those are Native American.

“More Natives are moving into our town,” Melton said. “It has increased within the last few years.”

Melton explained that there

are four city council members to go along with the mayor and all of them have to answer to the citizens.

“That is who we are working for,” Melton said.

Melton said she felt that where she grew up helped her prepare for her new position on the city council.

“I grew up in the town of Dustin,” Melton said. “We have the traditional values with everyone helps everyone. I feel with those views that I have growing up, we can instill those in our City of Beggs.”

Melton spoke about what made her want to run for city council.

“I was approached about running for our city council,” Melton said. “I told everyone I had to do my homework first but after I looked it over I thought I would be good to candidate for that position.”

Melton was not prepared to celebrate her success in the election. When she heard that she was ahead in the polls she was heading to a baseball practice.

“I did not have a watch party,” Melton said. “I was surprised that they voted me in.”

She had a certain way of looking at the results when it was finalized.

“I told myself, ‘If I won, I won,’ Melton said. “If I didn’t, I didn’t. I had no hard feelings about it either way.”

Melton said she cannot wait to serve the citizens of Beggs. Her term is two years.

“Anything that can help our city go further, that is what I want to do,” Melton said. “We want Beggs to be successful.”

Melton has four children and has been married for over 17 years. She is a member of Arberka Ceremonial Grounds and the Skunk Clan.

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MCN program offers Social Security filing assistance



Shutterstock image

A first-hand account of the application process

Gary Fife/Radio Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — When you’re young, you think that filing for Social Security is just something that old folks think about, that such a thing is light-years away and won’t matter to you for ages.

But, those years slip by and the next thing you know, you get old and retirement age is staring you in the face. Then, it’s time to find out what the process is, what kinds of federal benefits are available to you and when the best time is for you to start receiving them.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation has an office established to assist Muscogee (Creek) citizens in filing for Social Security and other supplementary benefits for which they may be eligible.

Since I was a few months shy of reaching 65-years-of-age, I contacted that office in order to find out how to get signed up and pass that information on to other citizens who may be in the same age bracket and in need of this information.

Lottie Farris, Case Manager with the MCN Social Security Assistance Program spoke with me June 10 on ‘Mvskoke Radio’ about Social Security and explained what it was.

It all began in 1935 through President Franklin D. Roosevelt. “It was his idea to kind of force people to start saving for their retirement,” Farris said. “If something happened, where they passed away or became disabled and could no longer work, there would be a program where some income would come into the house.”

These are the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) and other deductions taken out of employee paychecks as retirement benefits to go towards what Americans receive when they retire and file with the Social Security Administration.

“That is a mandatory tax for probably 99.9 percent of workers out there,” Farris said. “They take six point two percent out of every paycheck and then your employer will take the additional six point two percent to contribute to Social Security.”

Upon retirement, recipients can expect the federal program

to only meet a portion of their financial needs, and Farris suggests workers have some other alternatives going for them.

“But you need to start putting aside for your own savings, 401(k)s, your pensions that you get from your employer and make sure that everything is involved,” Farris said. “Social Security will pay about 40 percent of your pre-retirement earnings in a benefit. So, you have that other 60 percent that you’ve been living on 62 or 65 years and you need something to fill that gap.”

Those seeking MCN SSAP assistance should bring their Social Security and MCN citizenship cards.

Signing up begins with an assessment form.

“We do take applications for retirement, disability, SSI and Medicare. We’re able to help our clients.

“One of the things they do need to remember is that we are funded by the tribe and so only Creek citizens are allowed to file with us or their dependents. So, if you are married to a non-Creek, your spouse can still get services from us, because you are Creek,” Farris said.

Basic information such as name, address and a Social Security number is requested. Some of that is confidential and is respected by program staff. That part of the file remains confidential.

“On our assessment, we kind of ask, ‘what you’re in for? What are you interested in and filing for?’ In your case, we ask you about your work, if you are planning to continue to work, how much you’re going to work and earn and what your plans for re-

tirement are going to be,” Farris said.

They tailored the process to my specific situation from there.

“When we found out that you are going to continue to work for a while and since you’re turning 65 in the fall, you came in, in time for us to take a Medicare application for you to have your Medicare effective on your birth month,” Farris said.

She outlined my pertinent information based on that.

“We want to know about your citizenship, where you were born and that is for Social Security to identify you in their system,” Farris said. “So, what we ask for is your Social Security number, your date of birth. We

any spouses, we don’t need to know how much you’re working and earning and that sort of thing. We just know that you want your Medicare to start,” Farris said.

Required information about existing health insurance is next.

“We ask you about your group health plan and with most employers, it’s when you start working,” Farris said. “You say your employment is continuing, so we don’t really need the Part B of Medicare and that’s what we want to make sure of, that you don’t need it before we turn you loose and say ‘OK.’ ”

Medicare has an initial enrollment period, where you can file three months before your birth-

“Social Security will pay about 40 percent of your pre-retirement earnings in a benefit.”

— MCN SSAP Case Manager
Lottie Farris

very rarely have to have proof of birth these days, because Social Security has upgraded their system and they don’t need that information because it has been put in there already.”

A current mailing address is needed however.

“Even though you’re not receiving a benefit. We need to know where to send your card, any updates on Medicare that you might need,” Farris said.

Again, my specific needs determined what was needed for the application.

“Then they want to know if you want to file for monthly benefits, in addition to your Medicare. In your case, you answered that question ‘no’ because you are going to continue working. So, that kind of limits the information we need.

“We don’t need to know about


day, the month of your birthday or three months after. This timely filing, she said, is critical because Medicare benefits could be delayed or financial penalties could occur otherwise.

With the assessment and application complete, my initial Social Security health coverage will be set up. Monthly payments will be delayed until I am ready to stop working and start receiving them.

I will be earning credits and a higher payment if I continue working after retirement age.

The pile of correspondence from insurance companies is growing as they try to sell me coverage. I’ll probably take a look at them and discard most.

MCN SSAP is on hand to help with Social Security and disability applications at: 918-549-2479.




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Oklahoma Study of Native American Pain Risk (OK-SNAP)

Healthy Research Participants Needed



This study is safe and non-invasive. Participants must be able to attend 2 testing sessions (approximately 4-5.5 hours/sessions). \$200 compensation (\$100/day) is provided.

The TU Psychophysiology Laboratory for Affective Neuroscience is dedicated to identifying mechanisms that contribute to and/or maintain chronic pain, and to developing non-invasive methods for assessing individuals at risk for developing chronic pain conditions.



For more information call:
918-631-2175 or 918-631-3565
You may also visit our website at: <http://orgs.utulsa.edu/psychophys>
or on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Oklahoma-Study-of-Native-American-Pain-Risk/465628426873916>

The University of Tulsa, Psychophysiology Laboratory for Affective Neuroscience is conducting a University of Tulsa IRB-approved research study aimed at assessing pain processing in Native Americans.

The goal of this study is to identify potential markers of risk for chronic pain in healthy (currently pain-free) Native American individuals.

To participate, you must NOT*

- **Currently have chronic pain or take pain medications**
- **Have high blood pressure or take antihypertensive medications**
- **Take antidepressant or anti-anxiety medications**

***Additional eligibility criteria do apply.**

Investigators:
Dr. Jamie Rhudy & Dr. Joanna Shallow



Emvpanayv: 'One who tells a story'



Stuck with \$20 Jackson, new Native liaison, upcoming elections

Gary Fife/Radio Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — It looks like Natives have lost out on the campaign to get rid of Andrew Jackson on the U.S. \$20 bill.

The late Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller was put forward to replace Ol' Hickory, but didn't win the public vote for her candidacy.

Now, according to the U.S. Treasury website, Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew has decided that the new \$10 note should feature a woman and not the \$20. The feds chose the \$10 because, they say, it is the biggest target for counterfeiters.

The new notes are scheduled to appear in 2020, in part to mark the 100th anniversary of the constitutional amendment that gave women the right to vote.

The public will be able to weigh in on who should replace Alexander Hamilton — the first ever U.S. secretary of the Treasury. Secretary Lew will announce the selection later this year. Maybe we should start a 'write-in' for Mankiller?

Remember all those bad jokes about all those non-Indian people claiming they are descended from 'Cherokee grandmothers?' What if it were true? Could it be?

Here's something: most multi-racial Americans say they are part Indian (that is, the American type and not the folks over in Asia).

The, Pew Research group a national research think tank says their findings are that 50 percent of Americans surveyed who claimed they had more than one race in their ancestry, say they're Indian.

2013 numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau say about 21 percent checked off the racial combination of Indian and white.

And... survey says! Most have little or nothing to do with their respective tribes.

Big surprise there, huh?

The mid-June edition of 'Broadcasting and Cable' reports, the U.S. secretary of Education says the Disneyland-On-The-Potomac professional football team should change its name.

Sec. Ed Duncan said: "It makes no sense to me why the Washington pro football team won't do the same and stop perpetuating racial stereotypes."

That was recently, after teams in the states of California and New York dropped their Native nicknames and mascots.

Closer to home, a new staff member has been added to the Oklahoma governor's American Indian liaison office.

To refresh your memory, Jacque Hensley was brought in to take over the consultation

duties that were handled by the former Indian Affairs Commission. Gov. Mary Fallin eliminated the commission a few years ago, saying that a liaison could better make the connection with the state's tribal governments and her office.

Uh-huh. This year, Chris Bengé, a Cherokee man was named to take over the position formerly held by Hensley.

In an interview with 'Mvskoke Radio' earlier this year, Bengé said there was a probable need for additional staff to perform some of the tasks. In other words, to do the actual work.

So, now we get Brian Hendrix named as Deputy Assistant for Native American Affairs in the Secretary of State's office. Hendrix was the State-Tribal Crime Victim Liaison with the District Attorney's Council. Word has it, he is a Mvskoke man.

I never heard anything about a search for someone to fill this staff position. So, the Governor has conducted two such searches to find someone for the job of hearing what tribes have to say and us plain-ol' Indins never heard a thing about either one of them.

Since this system has been in place, I haven't seen much, if anything produced or announced by the office. Hendrix is a step-down from the governor's Indian liaison, so I'm wondering if tribal concerns are now a step-down in importance to the administration.

Don't be too surprised if what you see is the new deputy assistant visiting a few tribes, getting the mandatory presents, tours and dinners and saying, he takes this position, 'very, very seriously.'

Go ahead, Gov., prove me wrong. Skeptic? Who me?

OK, now for the local stuff.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation elections are coming up. Positions up for grabs will be the principal chief, second chief and National Council seat A.

Mvskoke Media will conduct a political forum for candidates Aug. 15 at the Mvskoke Dome and it's still a work in progress, so stay tuned.

Make sure you are registered to vote and get out and cast your ballot. Remember:

"Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters." — Abraham Lincoln

Hvtvm Cehecares — I will see you again.

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FESTIVAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Tribal Complex.

Festival volunteer and Okfuskee Indian Community Track Team coach Melissa Culley said the Junior Olympics had a good number of participants and spectators this year.

The team has competed for 30 years and brought 50 children to participate in the event.

Culley said for her, the Junior Olympics is about the children being happy.

“Overall it is about the kids, the spirit of them. They are so happy and smiley all day long. They just want to be around kids,” Culley said. “I see their face lights up whether they win or lose, they are happy and that says it all to me, the smile on their face.”

Smiles and squeals abounded at the omniplex. The Children’s Fun Fair teamed with youth running from ride to ride. The fun fair featured bounce houses, rides and obstacle course style inflatables.

Meanwhile, in downtown Okmulgee, the MCN Cultural Center and Archives Department hosted the two-day Council House Art and Food Market.

“We started this really to kind of celebrate our artists, Muscogee artists, and it has grown into this art and food market,” CCA Special Projects Coordinator Chris Azbell said.

This year, CCA added an art show into the mix.

Non-staff judges selected winners for three categories: Best Mvskoke Artist went to Harry Beaver for a carved shell titled ‘A Kingfisher’s Catch,’ Best of Show was awarded to Scott Robert for his pottery piece ‘Sacred Path’ and the Judge’s Choice was Randy Kemp with a mixed media print titled ‘Lost Buffalo.’

As the Art and Food Market

wrapped up day two, the Friday night entertainment line up started with Goldwing Express, followed by Little Texas and Sawyer Brown.

As the sun rose on day three of the Festival June 27, runners stretched for the 5K Run/Walk. There were 208 participants ranging from under one-year to 90-years-old.

Brandon Payne of Henryetta finished the 5K first, Jordan Tuttle of Bristow finished second and Aaron Hannah of Siloam Springs, Ark., finished third.

The Festival Parade is a favorite with Festival-goers. The parade MCs this year were MCN Public Relations Manager Selina Jayne-Dornan and comedian Chance Rush.

Parade entries ranged from bikers to horse riders, princesses to veterans and marching bands to political candidates.

Big Chief and Murder Nova, from the Discovery Channel TV show ‘The Street Outlaws,’ also rode in the parade. They were on-hand in the afternoon at the Mvskoke Dome to sign autographs and meet fans.

As the evening approached, the softball tournament continued and the musical line up started with Smiling Vic.

The Canadian three-man group, A Tribe Called Red mixed electronica with powwow music.

The headlining acts for Saturday were the Commodores followed by Kool and the Gang. Even with the new parking lot at the omniplex, there was still not enough room for the mass amount of Festival attendees.

The MCN Transit Department shuttled people from the tribal complex to the omniplex.

The Festival wound down Sunday, June 28 with the completion of the softball tournaments.

Volunteers make Festival a success

Tourism department credits workers for important role

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief George Tiger said the 2015 MCN Festival shattered past attendance records.

With the tournaments, children’s fun fair, food vendors, fireworks and entertainment, things behind the scenes help make Festival a success.

Throughout the three-day event, several people wearing blue Festival shirts help run the show.

“Our Festival does not move without our volunteers,” MCN Department of Tourism and Recreation Office Manager Ryan Logan said. “They do so much and they are such an important part of the Festival.”

Among their many duties, volunteers: drive golf carts for festival patrons, keep score at the various tournaments and watch the omniplex to ensure vehicles do not enter unauthorized areas at unauthorized times.

While some worked a certain amount of hours this year, others went beyond the call of duty and stayed as long as they could.

“A lot of the volunteers wanted to help as much as possible,” TR Director Will Lowe said.

“Some of them did work over their hours so they could help keep things moving.”

Volunteers also make sure the entertainment is happy. Musicians typically request that certain areas are setup to make them comfortable before performing.

They can change their minds about how this is arranged at the drop of a hat.

The volunteers did what they had to do to keep things moving, washing and ironing clothes, changing dressing room locations, all in a timely fashion.

“Some of the entertainment had things that they needed done before they went on to perform their shows,” Logan said. “The volunteers did a lot for the entertainment to keep them happy and so that they will be ready to put on the show for the patrons.”

So while you enjoy everything at the Festival, please remember and appreciate the volunteers.

“I, or we, cannot thank the volunteers enough for what they do during Festival weekend,” Lowe said. “Our department cannot make this happen without the volunteers. They sit out in the 100 degree weather helping us and being there for us because, like us, they want to do everything to help all the people have a great time at the Festival.”

WE ARE MVSKOKE

“We invite everyone to experience the Muscogee (Creek) culture and be a part of our family.”

-MCN Tourism and Recreation Director Will Lowe

Kyle Martin

Nineteen members of the Long family traveled from other parts of Oklahoma and out of state to make the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival a part of their family reunion activities.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Kyle Martin made the hope skip and jump from Morris, Okla.

“We just make a big weekend out of it,” Kyle said.

It was the family’s first time to attend the stompdance. He was excited to share his Mvskoke heritage with his non-Native family members.

“We’ve got family members from out of state that’s never seen it so we wanted to bring them down and show them a stompdance and Indian culture,” Kyle said.

To him, family is a huge part of being Muscogee (Creek).

“It’s just family. We all kind of stick together and help each other out,” Kyle said.



A glimpse of the 2015 MCN Festival
by: Jessica McBride/Media Coordinator



Pat Adamson

Choctaw Nation citizen Pat Adamson soaked up the sun as she watched her four grandchildren play at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival Fun Fair.

“I live here in Okmulgee and I come every year,” she said.

Pat has attended the Festival for seven years, and has every intention of bringing the grand children back next year.

“I like the rides for the kids. That’s the main reason I come, to take the grand-kids,” Pat said.

Kaliq Jones

Under the shade of the tent, Muscogee (Creek) citizen Kaliq Jones and his grandfather hid from the flaming rays of the sun, planning what Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival event they would go to next.

This was the 11-year-old’s second time to come to the Festival.

Kaliq and his family discovered their Muscogee (Creek) heritage four years ago, and want to absorb everything Mvskoke to make up for lost time.

“Two years ago we came and it was great. There was a lot of Native American spirit around, like atmosphere,” Kaliq said. “We came back to get that again.”

His favorite part of the Festival are the jewelry displays.



The Baldwins

It was Cherokee Nation citizen Cadee Baldwin’s first time running in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival, but not her first 5K event.

The run was a family affair, with her mother Amber, her father John and her 71-year-old grandfather.

“We’re all in the diabetes prevention walking program,” Amber said.

The family received bonus points through the MCN Walking Program for running in the event.

Amber said everyone involved in the Festival had been very welcoming.

The family is proud to be Cherokee. “I’m very proud of my heritage,” Amber said.



Adam Thomas Jr.

Known as JR to most, Muscogee (Creek) citizen Adam Thomas Jr. gazed at gathers, preparing for the stompdance.

He has been coming to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival all of his life. His mother was a Muscogee (Creek) citizen.

JR used to work for MCN during the Claude Cox administration, and helped build the rodeo arena.

“That’s a long time ago,” JR said.

JR is a member of Arbeka Ceremonial Ground, and went to Festival to enjoy himself. He planned to attend all festivities for the weekend.

“Be proud. Be Creek,” JR said.



Muscogee (Creek) Nation Community and Tribal Events

The power of determination

Muscogee (Creek) citizen Leslie Powell’s amazing educational journey

Julie Moss, M.A.
CMN Adjunct Instructor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — When one decides to make a crucial decision affecting the lives of many, the first steps are often the most difficult, especially for those taking a non-traditional path. This story is one that gives insight into a Native student who chose to make a life-changing decision for her family and professional career. My observation of her decision and subsequent journey, as her instructor, intertwines with the growth and development of a Native American community college, and through her story we are able to see the promise of a better future in both.

Once all her children were grown and raised, Leslie Powell

earn a doctorate so she can continue to make an impact on her community.

Leslie’s sheer determination led her to complete a tribal services degree as the first female graduate from CMN, two years after entering my class. This paved the way for her to later earn a bachelor’s and master’s degree, and she was immediately employed by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. I am humbled and delighted that she is now enrolled in a Ph.D. program in education.

I know that Leslie is a cultural person, and attending CMN has given her the opportunity to interact with Native people from all backgrounds, including Muscogee (Mvskoke) people.

“This has made me, as a student, to feel I could be someone. I was free to be myself, so I could openly express my

“This has made me, as a student, to feel I could be someone. I was free to be myself, so I could openly express my ideas instead of being silent.”

— Muscogee (Creek) citizen
Leslie Powell

made the difficult decision to further her education beyond high school.

Her dedication was evident as she walked into the first night of a grant writing class at the College of the Muscogee Nation. The newly formed tribal college was holding classes on the campus of Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology (OSUIT) in Okmulgee, Okla. At the time, CMN operated under the auspices of OSUIT, until their own campus was built.

The grant writing course Ms. Powell walked into during the fall 2006 was my first teaching assignment at the college. It was very clear that Leslie was excited to learn as she was the first student in the room, pulling her wheeled backpack and carefully laying out her materials in preparation for class. Her positive energy and anticipation for the class permeated the room that night and was constant throughout the semester.

That night, I began the class by giving each student a chance to speak, to introduce themselves or say anything that might be on their mind as an icebreaker activity. The idea is to set the students’ mind at ease by saying why they are taking the class and what they hope to learn.

“Now that my kids are grown, I’ve decided it is my time. I knew it was time for me to get my education,” Leslie said as she made her introduction.

Speaking on conversations she had with her children, “I have done every kind of job. I’ve mopped floors, cleaned restrooms and flipped hamburgers... and if you don’t want that for yourself, you need to go out and get an education.”

I was truly impressed by the effort Leslie made to be a sound role model for her children, and accomplish her goals. She is a strong believer in giving back to her community, and her hopes and dreams are to

ideas instead of being silent. Just the feeling of being with my own American Indian people and being of the Muscogee (Creek) tribe, it gave me a renewed sense of pride in my heritage,” Leslie said

This sentiment is not unique to Leslie, it has been expressed to me by many students that they feel at home at the college, and they have a sense of belonging they have not previously experienced in an educational setting.

As students walk in and out of the entryway of the main administration building, they walk by clan symbol designs, Muscogee (Creek) language signage and architectural designs representative of Muscogee (Creek) heritage. They are filled with a sense of belonging and pride in their Native heritage.

I have seen the rise of CMN from its humble beginnings, as it has directly paralleled that of Leslie Powell’s journey, working tirelessly on assignments to reach her educational goals.

CMN has now grown to be one of the premier tribal college programs and campuses in the country, and is filled with great success stories on many levels. It is not only a center of learning and education for the Muscogee (Creek) citizens and the MCN community, but it is a point of great pride for the tribe as a most amazing and beautiful story and testament to students like Leslie.

Both of these journeys for the CMN and for Leslie Powell have been amazing and truly inspiring. At the end of each term, I send a letter to each student encouraging them to set, and then work toward their goals each and every day. It is my sincere hope that these letters give my students the inspiration to persevere, as the Mvskoke people have through many generations, and leave a legacy that includes the college and its students.

ECHO ANNUAL CELEBRATION SET JULY 25
OKMULGEE, Okla. — The ECHO Native American widows support group has set a third annual celebration for July 25 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Elderly Nutrition Center in Okmulgee.

For more information call Nancy Deere at: 918-756-4272.

CMCA GATHERING SET FOR AUG. 1
RIVERSIDE, Calif. — The annual California Muscogee (Creek) Association has set an annual gathering for Aug. 1 at Sherman Indian High School, 9010 Magnolia, Ave, Riverside CA, 92503.

For more information contact Jeanna Spirou at: 209-518-3554 or jeannars@yahoo.com.

TCIC YOUTH CAMP SET FOR AUG. 3-8
TULSA, Okla. — The Tulsa Creek Indian Community has set a weeklong youth ages 7-13 camp for Aug. 3-8. The camp will end with a parent day cook-out. Come join and make new friends.

Participants must live within TCIC boundaries and parents/guardians should be a TCIC member. If they are not, they may join.

The deadline to sign up is July 17 at 5 p.m. For more information call: 918-298-2464.

More details will be available in July.

FAMILY REUNION SET FOR SEPT. 7
HENRYETTA, Okla. — The Marshall family reunion is set for Sept. 7 from 12-3 p.m. at Nichols Park in Henryetta.

Bring a door prize and picnic items. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be served.

For more information, call Judy Montiel at: 918-752-5602.

MNN DEADLINES

- Aug. 1 — July 24
- Aug. 15 — Aug. 7
- Sept. 1 — Aug. 24
- Sept. 15 — Sept. 8
- Oct. 1 — Sept. 24
- Oct. 15 — Oct. 7
- Nov. 1 — Oct. 23
- Nov. 15 — Nov. 6
- Dec. 1 — Nov. 20
- Dec. 15 — Dec. 7
- Jan. 1, 2015 — Dec. 21



Eufaula Dorm now accepting applications

Eufaula Dorm/Media Release

EUFAULA, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Eufaula Dormitory is now accepting applications and enrollment dates for approved students will be Aug. 11-12 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Classes begin Aug. 13 and openings are available for 1st-12th grade students.

New students are required to have a: CDIB card, state certified birth certificate, Social Security card, updated immunization record, physical, transcript/report cards from the previous school year and an insurance card (front and back copy), Medicaid or Sooner Care card.

Parents of returning students must call for an enrollment packet. It is mandatory for grades 6-12 to have a physical prior to enrolling if they are planning to participate in any school activity or sport.

For more information write: Muscogee (Creek) Nation Eufaula Dormitory, 716 Swadley Drive, Eufaula, OK 74432 or call the dorm at: 1-800-896-3181 or 918-689-2522.

MCN Southern Regional office schedule

MCN SRO/Media Release

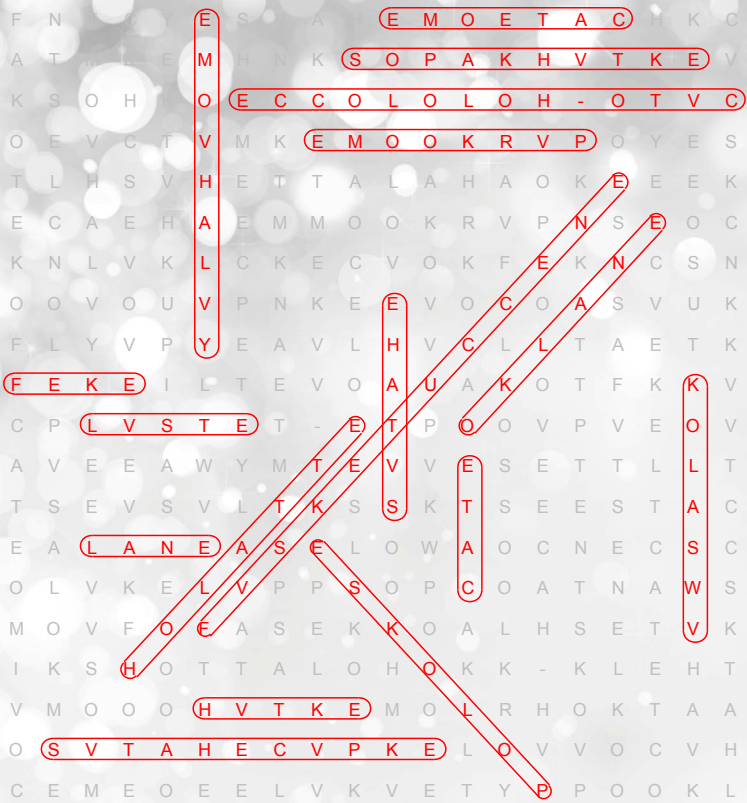
WETUMKA, Okla. — The following is the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Southern Regional Office schedule for July.

July 21, 28
Tax Commission
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Lunch 11-11:30 a.m.

July 29
Social Services along with Employment and Training
Closed

For more information call: 405-452-1100.

Solution to the July 1 word search



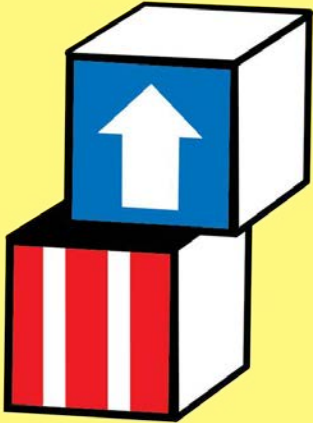
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation WETUMKA HEAD START is accepting applications for the 2015-2016 school year.

Requirements for the program will include:

- ▶ Child turning 3 or 4 year olds before September 1st
- ▶ Income Verification (last year’s income tax, pay stubs, W-2 form, TANF letter, SSI letter, or statement from employer)
- ▶ Citizenship or CDIB card (if applicable)
- ▶ Birth Certificate
- ▶ Immunization Record
- ▶ Child’s medical card

If you need additional information, call Janice Birdcreek at (405) 452-1180 or stop by the Wetumka Head Start at 333 South Washita, Wetumka Oklahoma.

We also have other Head Start Centers at Okmulgee (918) 758-1430, Checotah (918) 473-0605, Tulsa (918) 296-0357, Okemah (918) 623-2000, and Eufaula (918) 618-6220.











IN ADDITION TO PHOTOS FROM THE 'MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS' STAFF, VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS PROVIDED EXTENDED PROFESSIONAL PHOTO COVERAGE OF THE 41ST ANNUAL MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION FESTIVAL. THE MNN STAFF WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AND SAY 'MVTO' TO:

RIC DENNEY
JEANNIE EDWARDS